REMARKS

The application has been amended. Independent claims 1, 12, and 18 have been amended. Claims 1-27 are currently pending. The drawings have been amended. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings, specifically figures 6 and 10.

Fig. 6 was objected to for including label "128" which is not noted in the specification. This label has been deleted. Applicant submits that this amendment obviates the Examiner's objection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

Fig. 10 has been objected to as including loops 142 on the outside of the branch 138, while Fig. 8 shows hooks 140 on the outside of the branch. The specification points out in the Brief description of the drawings at page 10, last paragraph before the Detailed Description, that the arrangement of hook and loop structures in Fig. 10 is opposite that of Fig. 8. Fig. 10 has been amended to show loops 142 on the interior surface of the branch 138. Therefore, Applicant submits that this amendment obviates the Examiner's rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

Section 102 Rejections

Claims 1-27 have been rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,485,524 to Strecker ("Strecker"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 12, and 18 have been amended to more clearly set forth the subject matter of the invention. Applicant respectfully submits that these amendments obviate the

rejections under Section 102. With respect to independent claims 5, 15, and 23, the rejections under Section 102 are respectfully traversed on the grounds that Strecker does not disclose every element of those claims.

Each of the independent claims will be discussed separately.

The present invention provides a tubular endovascular prosthesis with either sections or a patch that include corresponding hooks and loops or a patch which form a substantially fluid tight seal when engaged. Methods of using the same are also provided. The prosthesis and methods provide a method for implanting a prosthesis in a branched vessel, such as the at the infrarenal section of the abdominal aortic artery and for repairing a damaged prosthesis *in situ*.

Strecker discloses a stent which includes two separate filaments for the preparation of one longitudinal section of a stent. Individually, each filament is a not tubular structure, but to the contrary has "a nearly one-dimensional structure." Column 2, line 47. The combination of the filaments is required *in situ* to provide a single tubular endovascular prosthesis. Strecker's goal is to provide a stent with improved stability and flexibility which he attempts to achieve through the combination of at least two opposed spirals. See Abstract.

Claim 1 of the present invention claims an endovascular prosthesis which includes a tubular endovascular member including one of either a hook or loop structure and a patch including the other of the hook or loop structure. Strecker provides no disclosure, teaching, or suggestion of applying a patch to an existing tubular endovascular structure. The separate filaments of Strecker are together what form the prosthesis. Since Strecker fails to disclose every element of claim 1, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4 all depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are therefore also believed to be patentably distinct.

Claim 5 of the present invention is directed to a method of repairing a damaged area of an endovascular prosthesis. The method includes applying a patch which includes either a hook or loop structure to an endovascular prosthesis having either a hook or loop structure cooperative with the hook or loop structure of the patch which is positioned within a body lumen. Neither of the filaments as provided by Strecker operates individually as an endovascular prosthesis. As is pointed out above, the combination of filaments in Strecker is what provides an endovascular prosthesis. There is no disclosure, teaching or suggestion in Strecker of a method of repairing a damaged section of an endovascular prosthesis. Strecker therefore fails to disclose every element of claim 5 and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 6-11 all depend directly or indirectly from claim 5 and are therefore also believed to be patentably distinct.

Independent claims 12 and 18 are directed toward a multi-component endovascular prosthesis and a method of assembling the same, respectively. The prosthesis includes a first tubular structure including either a hook or loop structure which corresponds to the hook or loop structure of the second component of the prosthesis. While Strecker seeks to provide a stent that includes more than one filament, Strecker differs from the present invention in that the two filaments in Strecker together form a single tubular structure. By contrast, the present invention first provides a tubular prosthetic component, then adds a second component. Strecker provides no disclosure of attaching separate tubular structures. Strecker therefore fails to disclose every

element of claims 12 and 18 and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 13-14 and 19-20 all depend directly or indirectly from claims 12 and 18, respectively, and are therefore also believed to be patentably distinct.

Claims 15 and 23 are directed toward a bifurcated endovascular prosthesis. The prosthesis includes main prosthetic component and a branch component which are attached through corresponding hook and loop structures. Strecker also provides a bifurcated prosthesis, but one that is attaches to separate branches by a figure eight shaped filament. Column 15, lines 59-63. Strecker uses the figure eight shaped filament to stabilize the prosthesis. Strecker provides no disclosure that the stabilization may be achieved through the use of a hook and loop device. Strecker therefore fails to disclose every element of claims 15 and 23 and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 16-17 and 24-27 all depend directly or indirectly from claims 15 and 23 and are therefore also believed to be patentably distinct.

Having responded in full to the present Office Action it is respectfully submitted that the application including claims 1 through 27 is in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina L. Warrick
Registration No.: 45,690
Attorney for Applicant

HOFFMANN & BARON, LLP
6900 Jericho Turnpike
Syosset, NY 11791
(973) 331-1700